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ABSTRACT

The factors involved in assuming the role of members from different social groups were studied in six- and eight-year-old white Anglo-American children. The role taking task involved rating various ethnic members in terms of their desirability as uncles or nephews for the role person. A cognitive-developmental factor was manipulated by choosing two age groups of subjects around the decentration stage of cognitive development. Social factors were introduced by having the children take the roles of persons who varied along three social dimensions--ethnicity, age, and language. The ethnicity variables was the major focus for the role taking, and accurate role taking was operationalized as showing a preference for kin from the same ethnic groups as the role person. Results indicate that both six- and eight-year-olds were accurate in taking the role of their own and a liked ethnic group, but inaccurate when taking the role of a disliked group. Age differences in various roles taken did not disrupt this accuracy, but language differences did, especially when the white role person spoke a non-English language. Difficulties in role taking are discussed in terms of two disruptive processes: egocentric tendencies and lack of perceptual differentiation. (Author)

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Taking the Role of Different Ethnic Groups: A Developmental Study

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Abstract

Role taking behaviour was studied in six- and eight-year-old while Anglo-American children. Developmental factors were manipulated by choosing two groups of children around the decentration stage of cognitive development; a social factor was introduced by having them take the role of persons who varied along three social dimensions: age, language, and ethnicity. Three ethnic roles were chosen on the basis of the child's own attitudes: the child's own, his most liked ethnic group, and his most disliked ethnic group. The role taking task involved rating various ethnic persons in terms of their desirability as an uncle or nephew for the role person. Accurate role taking was operationalized in terms of showing a preference for kin from the same ethnic group as the role person. Results indicated that both six- and eight-year-olds were accurate in taking the role of their own and a liked ethnic group, but inaccurate when taking the role of a disliked group. Age differences in various roles taken did not disrupt this accuracy, but language differences did, especially when the white role person spoke a non-English language. Difficulties in role taking were discussed in terms of two disruptive processes: egocentric tendencies and lack of perceptual differentiation.

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Role taking has been defined generally as the ability to take on the cognitive and affective characteristics of another person (Sarbin & Allen, 1968). The motive for taking the role of someone is rarely to actually play out that role. More often, it is to understand that person in order to predict his behavior. Role taking is therefore a skill which leads to more effective interaction and communication (Flavell, 1968).

A process prerequisite to role taking is that of person perception, which according to Tagiuri (1969) refers to inferences made about internal attributes such as intentions, capabilities, beliefs, and attitudes, on the basis of observation of external characteristics. Role taking has therefore been regarded as both a general cognitive skill which develops parallel to other conceptual processes such as conservation (Piaget, 1971), and a social skill which requires differentiation between oneself and others (Vygotsky, 1962).

The influence of cognitive-developmental factors has been demonstrated primarily by age differences. Flavell's (1968) research would

indicate that role taking skills are acquired during middle childhood and early adolescence as a child learns to decenter his perspective. In an attempt to extract a unitary ability underlying role taking, Rubin (1973) factor analyzed children's scores on various measures of egocentrism, and on a conservation task. A single factor labelled "decentration" loaded highly on all measures of egocentrism as well as conservation. This suggests that the single cognitive ability to decenter underlies a variety of role taking skills. Others (e.g. O'Connor, 1975; Shantz, 1975) have provided evidence for a somewhat more specific set of abilities demanded by different role taking tasks. More relevant to the present study is the suggestion by Piaget and Weil (1951) that complex social role taking requires both decentration (or broadening) of geographical affiliations as well as an acquisition of the concept of reciprocity. In other words, the child must see himself as a member of, not only a family group, but also a town, a region, a nation, and a language community. He must then be able to reciprocate his feelings of affiliation for these groups to members of other groups. Thus a full understanding of relationships based on nationality does not develop until late in middle childhood. In fact, they found that Swiss children were not able, until eleven years of age, to comprehend the relativity of national affiliation: that a Frenchman would not be a foreigner in France, but a Swiss would be.

The adoption of various social roles, therefore, seems to require an understanding of one's own social characteristics and a differentiation between one's own characteristics and those of others. Awareness of age

and sex differences, for example, is acquired between the ages of four and six (Flavell, 1968, Task IIIB) as children overtly in play or covertly take on various parental roles (Maccoby, 1959). Shatz and Gelman (1973) found that four-year-old children used different speech styles to a two-year-old than to an adult listener. Appreciation of social differences based on ethnicity or language seem to develop later (Piaget & Weil, 1951, Middleton, Tajfel & Johnson, 1970). The differentiation process may, however, become enhanced after certain experiences. Genesee (1974), for example, found that children aged 5½ to 7½ years, who attended school in their non-native language demonstrated more complete reciprocity on the basis of language and nationality than did children who attended school in their native language. However, both groups of children evidenced what Genesee called "second-order ethnocentrism" by assuming that the member of another ethno-linguistic group would like his (the child's) group more than he liked that group. It is clear that the children's behavior in these situations is more complex than is suggested by a simple egocentric-nonegocentric dichotomy.

The present study attempted to investigate several factors involved in taking the role of members from different social groups. The role taking task involved rating various ethnic members in terms of their desirability as uncles or nephews for the role person. A cognitive-developmental factor was manipulated by choosing two age groups of subjects around the decentration stage of cognitive development. Social factors were introduced by having the children take the role of persons who varied along three social dimensions: ethnicity, age, and language.

The ethnicity variable was the major focus for role taking, and accurate role taking was operationalized as showing a preference for kin from the same ethnic group as the role person. The role persons, in addition, varied in age and language, so that the extent to which this additional information impeded accurate role taking could be assessed. It was hypothesized that age differences would disrupt accurate role taking less than language differences because of the greater experience that white English-speaking children have with age groups different from their own.

The ethnicity variable is somewhat more complex. Brand, Ruiz, and Padilla (1974) have cited studies which suggest that ethnic categorization begins at a very early age, but that its development is complicated by processes of self-identification and preference. We therefore expected that affective as well as cognitive factors would influence ethnic role taking. In other words, a child may be conceptually able to take the role of another ethnic group member, and socially able to differentiate himself from other ethnic groups, but his negative attitude toward that member may interfere. The effect of attitudes on role taking was demonstrated in a study by Middleton, Tajfel, and Johnson (1970). They found that seven-year-old British children, though relatively accurate in adopting the role of a like group, were unable to assume that members of a disliked nation would have preferences different from their own. At eleven years of age, children were able to overcome this egocentrism and adopt the preferences of liked and disliked nations equally. Therefore, in the present study, the affective value of the role person was studied by choosing three ethnic roles of varying

preference values: the child's own, his most liked ethnic group, and his most disliked ethnic group. The second hypothesis was that negative affect would disrupt accurate role taking more than would positive affect held toward the role person.

Method

Subjects

The 50 White Anglo-American school children who participated in this study were selected from first and third grade classes at Everson-Nooksack Elementary school in Everson, Washington. Twenty-five were in the first gradeand had a mean age of 6.0 years (13 males, 12 females) and twenty-five were in the third grade and had a mean age of 8.1 years (12 males, 13 females).

Materials

Stimulus persons were presented to the children in the form of photographs and tape recordings. Color photographs were taken of individual members of four different ethnic groups: White American, Oriental American, Indian American, and Mexican American, who for brevity will hereafter be referred to as Whites, Orientals, Indians, and Chicanos, respectively. For each of these ethnic groups there were photos of four representative members: two peers who were 6-8 years old and two adults who were 19-26 years old producing a total of 16 photos. The stimulus persons were all males and were selected for the obviousnes of their ethnic group affiliation. All stimulus persons posed with a neutral facial expression, and as a preliminary check, the choice of each representative was based on the accuracy with which he was ethnically

identified by 10 college students.

The language of the stimulus persons was presented via tape recordings of males speaking English and non-English languages. Using the matched-guise technique (Lambert, 1967), four adult males and four young males were taped, each speaking in English for one tape recording and in a non-English language for a second tape recording. The non-English languages selected as being appropriate for the four ethnic groups were: French (Whites), Japanese (Oriental adults) and Korean (Oriental peers),[1] a Yakima Indian dialect (Indians), and Spanish (Chicanos). Each of the language recordings were made by a bilingual who spoke once in English and then translated the same message into one of the non-English languages. The bilingual children producing the tapes were asked to count, and to talk about animals they liked, and the adults were asked to talk about the weather. These topics were chosen because of their relative neutrality, since it was desired that the subjects responded to the language cue and not to the message content. In each case the recordings were played for approximately 10 seconds.

Rating scales consisting of flat rectangular sheets of cardboard 20 cm x 60 cm were used. The long sides of the rectangle were marked off in increments of 1 cm and numbered from 1 to 59. The end facing the subjects was the numerically low end of the scale. A separate rating board was used for each of the three tasks: attitude, similarity, and role taking. These rating boards were identical, except in color to suggest to the children that each had a different purpose even though they were operationally the same.

Procedure

The children were tested individually and their behavior was observed in four different task situations, measuring: 1) their ability to identify the ethnicity of the stimulus persons, 2) the attitude held by the subjects toward each of the ethnic representatives, 3) the children's perception of the similarity between themselves and the peer stimulus persons, and 4) the ability of the subjects to take the role of both the adult and peer stimulus persons from the subject's own ethnic group, the ethnic group most liked by the subject, and the ethnic group most disliked by the subject, speaking both English and non-English. In each of the relevant tasks, it was systematically varied as to which age group the subject was shown first.

1) Identification of the ethnic groups. The eight mounted photos from one of the two age groups were placed in a semi-circle in front of the child. This method of presentation was utlilzed in all of the remaining tasks. The child was then asked to point out both members of each ethnic group. If a child failed after two attempts, one correct photo was pointed out and the child was asked to find the other stimulus person from that ethnic group. The tester repeated the instructions until satisfied that the subject was capable of making the correct photo-label association. This procedure was then repeated for the stimulus persons of the remaining age group. The purpose of this task was to ensure that all children could correctly identify the ethnicity of the stimulus persons on the basis of their photographs.

2) Attitude ratings. A rating board verbally identified as the "Liking board" was placed in front of the child. Instructions were given to place the things that he liked close to himself and the things that he did not like farther away. A practice trial was run in which the subject was shown a drawing of a rabbit, a dog, and a snake. The child was asked to place each animal drawing on the board to indicate how he felt about it. The tester validated these ratings verbally with the child to make sure that the relative placements matched the subject's actual feelings. The subject was then instructed to place the eight ethnic representatives from the first age group on the board closer to himself if he liked them and farther away if he disliked them. As the stimulus persons were being placed on the board the numerical scale value closest to the front edge of the photo was recorded. This procedure was repeated for the remaining age group. A numerical score from 1 (like) to 60 (dislike) was thereby obtained for each age and ethnic representative. The average score for each ethnic group other than the subject's own was used to determine the most liked and most disliked of the Oriental, Indian and Chicano groups for the later role-taking task.

3) Similarity ratings. Another 60 cm scaled board was used to assess how similar each child perceived the peer ethnic representatives to himself. The child was asked to place close to himself a representative who was similar to him and farther away a representative who was different.

4) Role-taking task. The other rating board identified as the "Uncle-nephew board" was placed in front of the subject. On separate occasions the child was required to take the role of 12 role persons whose character-

istics consisted of a factorial combination of the two age groups (peer and adult), three ethnic groups (own, most liked, and most disliked), and two language groups (English and non-English). The two languages were spoken by two different representatives from each ethnic group and this was randomized. The order was randomized for some variables but not for others: English speaking roles were taken before non-English roles and own ethnic roles were taken before other ethnic roles, but the order of the other ethnic roles and the age roles were randomized.

While the subject was looking at the role-person's photo the appropriate taped conversation was played. The child was asked to take this person's role by indicating whom he would like as an uncle for the peer roles, and whom he would like as a nephew for the adult roles. The groups from which the uncles and nephews were selected will hereafter also be referred to as kinship persons or just kin. The role person was placed in front of the board, occupying a position and role analogous to the one occupied by the subject in the previous tasks. The child was asked to place the eight kinship persons (the two opposite-aged representatives from the four ethnic groups) on the board, close if the role person would like to have the ethnic representative for an uncle or nephew and far away if he would not like the ethnic representative as an uncle or nephew, whichever kin relationship was appropriate. For some of the first grade children who did not understand the concept of nephew, the term younger brother was substituted. The subject was asked to position the uncle/nephew choices on the board as he expected the role person would, were he actually there. The numerical score for each kinship person constituted the dependent measure.

Results

The primary focus of this study was to determine how a child's role-taking ability is influenced by three characteristics of the role person: the likability of his ethnic group, his language, and his age. Accuracy in role-taking was operationally defined as reciprocating one's own preference for a same ethnicity uncle or nephew to other ethnic, language and age persons by presuming that they too would prefer a same ethnicity kin. Ethnicity, per se, of the role person was not investigated: rather the likability of that ethnicity was varied in the role persons. Thus, the dependent measure used in this analysis to determine accuracy in role taking was not the ethnicity of the uncles and nephews but the likability of their ethnic group. Correspondence could then be made with the ethnicity of the role persons since they were also categorized in terms of likability-of-ethnic-group. The average for the attitude and similarity ratings will not be presented here (see added Table) because they were used only to manipulate or explain each individual child's role taking.

The role persons's preference for uncles and nephews was analyzed in a 6-way analysis of variance with repeated measures taken on the last five of the six following factors: 1) grade of the subjects (first and third grades), 2) likability of the role persons's ethnic group (own ethnic group, most liked ethnic group, and most disliked ethnic group), 3) the role person's language (English and non-English), 4) the role person's age (peer and adult), 5) the likability of the uncles' and nephews' ethnic group (own ethnic group, most liked ethnic group, middle liked ethnic group, and most disliked ethnic group), and lastly 6) the

two representative uncles and nephews from each ethnic group (see Table 1 for analysis). This last factor was included because it was expected that the subjects would be responding not only to the ethnic cues but also to the individual visual characteristics of each stimulus person. In fact, there was a main effect found for this factor in the role taking analysis which suggested that the two representatives from the adult, disliked group were rated more differently than the two representatives from the other age/ethnicity kin. Individual differences of this one particular group were therefore somewhat more pronounced.

Table 1 about here

Because of the complexity of results which incorporate six factors, this section will be divided into two parts: results which exclude differential placement of the ethnic kin, and results which include differential placement of the ethnic kin. This latter section is most relevant to the hypotheses about accuracy of role taking (preference for ethnically-appropriate kin) under specific conditions.

Results Unrelated to Kin Placement

Main effects were found for the factors of the ethnic likability and language of the role person. The likability of the ethnicity of the role person result indicated that there was less overall preference for all of the uncles and nephews when taking the role of someone from one's own ethnic group ($\underline{M}$ = 23.10) than when taking the role of the most

liked (M = 21.90) and most disliked (M = 21.89) ethnic persons. It should be remembered that the lower the score the greater the preference since ratings were made in terms of closeness to the role person. Similarly, the language result demonstrated that there was less preference for all of the uncles and nephews when the subjects were taking the role persons who spoke the child's own language, English (M - 22.79), and generally greater preference expressed when the role person spoke a non-English language (M = 21.80). This makes sense if the children were using a majority-minority dichotomy of ethnicity, since three-quarters of the kinship persons were not from the child's own majority ethnic group.

These two effects suggest that the subjects expressed a more negative attitude to the range of uncles and nephews provided when taking the role of someone from their own ethnic and language group than when they were taking the role of a different ethnic and language group. The subjects' grade level, however, did interact with the ethnic likability factor. This interaction suggests that the first grade children showed this more negatively discriminating attitude in their own-ethnicity role than did the third graders. A four-way interaction involving Grade of subject X Ethnicity of role X Language of role X Age of role suggests that this negative attitude relates to very specific roles. The first graders were most negative when taking the White peer non-English role and the White adult English role. These two roles contributed most to the negative attitude toward the uncles and nephews provided, as previously discussed. The third graders typically did not place the kinship persons farther

away when taking a white role except when he was an adult who spoke English. This interaction relates simply to the average placement of all kin persons, and so reflects a general attitude toward all groups rather than accuracy in relating characteristics of a role person to the characteristics of the kinship persons.

Results Related to Kin Placement

The most relevant effects in this investigation are those involving the interactions between the ethnicity of the uncles and nephews and factors related to the role persons since this would best demonstrate role-taking accuracy. We might expect that if the subjects were egocentric, then they would show a preference for Own group kinship persons when taking different roles. A significant interaction between the Ethnicity of the kinship person X Grade of subjects demonstrated that this egocentrism was characteristic of the first grade children but not of the third graders. The first graders thought that their own ethnic group would be liked most as uncles and nephews ($\underline{M}$ - 22.59) and that the ethnic group they disliked would be liked the least by all role persons ($\underline{M}$ = 24.48). On the other hand, the third grade subjects thought that the most liked ethnic group ($\underline{M}$ = 16.95) rather than their own ethnic group ($\underline{M}$ = 22.08) would be preferred as kin over all role persons. The third graders are combining two types of information: their own egocentric preferences as well as a knowledge of the majority-minority categorization. They may be aware that two-thirds of the role persons (liked and disliked roles) have minority affiliations and so would like minority kin, but the specific minority chosen is based on their own egocentric preferences.

The ethnicity of the kinship persons also interacted with two of the three different characteristics of the role person: the likability of their ethnic group and their spoken language. It will be remembered that accurate role-taking would be demonstrated if the subjects thought that the role persons would prefer uncles and nephews of the same ethnicity as those role persons. The significant interaction between Ethnicity of the role person X Ethnicity of the kinship persons did in fact suggest that accuracy was achieved when taking the role of the Own and Liked ethnicity persons, but some confusion is evident when the subjects were taking the role of a Disliked ethnic group member. The language spoken by the role person interacted with the ethnicity of the uncles and nephews in demonstrating that children are more likely to exhibit egocentric behavior when taking the role of someone who speaks their own language (English). This was evidenced by a greater preference for Own-ethnicity uncles and nephews when the role persons spoke English but a greater preference for other-ethnicity kin when the role person spoke a non-English language.

The interaction between all three factors (Likability of the ethnicity of the role person X Language spoken by the role person X Ethnicity of the uncles and nephews) exemplifies the previously mentioned results in greater detail. For the purpose of clarity this interaction will be interpreted separately for each ethnic role (see Figure 1). Two characteristics of the role-taking behavior will be described: first, the children's accuracy in relating the ethnicity of the uncles and nephews to the ethnicity of the role person, and secondly, the effects of the language.

Figure 1 about here

When taking the role of an English speaking person from their own ethnic group, a Newman-Keuls comparison of means indicated that the uncles and nephews from the Own ethnic group were significantly more preferable as kin ($\underline{M}$ = 11.16). The members of the three remaining ethnic groups were equally less preferred as uncles and nephews (Liked $\underline{M}$ = 26.66, Middle $\underline{M}$ = 27.55, and Disliked $\underline{M}$ = 29.36). However, when the Own group role person spoke a non-English language the subjects thought that the kin from their own ethnic group would be significantly less preferable ($\underline{M}$ = 18.00), and the uncles and nephews from the Liked ethnic group significantly more preferable ($\underline{M}$ = 21.14) to the non-English speaking role person than to the English speaking role person. In fact, the uncles and nephews from the Liked ethnic group were perceived to be as desirable as members of the Own ethnic group when the role person spoke a non-English language. The uncles and nephews from the Middle-liked ($\underline{M}$ = 24.77) and Disliked ($\underline{M}$ = 26.18) ethnic groups were not significantly different from each other, but were less desirable as kin than the Own group uncles and nephews regardless of the language spoken. Generally, when the white role person spoke English the subjects demonstrated a strong preference for white kinship and a great deal of differentiation between the white kin and the other ethnic group kin. However, this preference and this differentiation were considerably reduced when the white role person spoke a non-English language.

There were no differences due to the language spoken by the role person when the subjects took the role of the Liked ethnic group. Accurate role taking was shown in that both the English and non-English role persons from the Liked ethnic group were thought to prefer uncles and nephews from the Liked ethnic group (English $\underline{M}$ = 15.50, non-English $\underline{M}$ =13.47). Interestingly enough, the subjects expected that the members of an ethnic group which they themselves liked most would not be interested in a white uncle or nephew from the subjects' own ethnic group (English $\underline{M}$ = 25.75, non-English $\underline{M}$ = 26.82). They did not think that their own preference for that ethnic group would be reciprocated. Instead, the uncles and nephews from the subjects own ethnic group would be significantly less preferable as kin and were rated in a manner similar to the Middle-liked and Disliked uncles and nephews (English $\underline{M}$ = 24.14, non-English $\underline{M}$ = 22.29; English $\underline{M}$ = 23.48, non-English $\underline{M}$ = 23.73 respectively). These results show that the subjects were accurate in relating ethnicity of kin to the ethnicity of the role person when the role person was liked, and that language did not change this perception.

Lastly, when taking the role of someone from an ethnic group they disliked, the subjects were less accurate than they had been in the two previously mentioned roles. This lack of accuracy was evidenced by the subjects' failure to differentiate between the kin who were of the same ethnicity as the role person and the kin who were of another ethnicity. For example, when the role person from the Disliked ethnic group spoke English, a Newman-Keuls comparison of means indicated that the uncles and nephews from all four ethnic groups would be equally preferred.

When the Disliked role person spoke a non-English language all of the uncles and nephews of the minority groups were likely candidates as kin in that they were placed equally close to the role person. The White uncles and nephews, however, were singled out and were placed significantly farther away than any of the other ethnic groups. Thus, accuracy is reduced when taking a disliked role, although language seemed to have a slight effect on this.

Discussion

The most important finding was demonstrated by the three-way interaction between ethnicity of the role, language of the role, and ethnicity of the preferred kin. This result would suggest four conclusions. Firstly, the children are accurate in taking the role of a different ethnic group insofar as the group is positively valued. They were able to infer that a Liked ethnic group member would prefer kinship from the same ethnicity, but they were not accurate in their inferences for a Disliked ethnic group member. Their inaccuracy for the Disliked role was evidenced by the lack of a differentiated preference for any ethnic kin: all kinship persons were thought to be equally desirable. Either the children felt that such a disliked person could not be "choosy" in his likes and dislikes, or the means represent simply an average of more differentiated preferences which lack consensus among the different children. Egocentrism may only be a partial explanation for the poor role taking results in this case. A closer look at the ratings of individual subjects suggested that 38 percent of the preferences made for a Disliked English

speaking role person could be classed as egocentric (greater preference for a White than for a similar ethnicity kin). Middleton, Tajfel, and Johnson explained the interference of a negative attitude on role taking in terms of preventing a child from transcending his egocentric tendencies. The present findings suggest that this may only be partially true. It will be remembered that when the Disliked role spoke a non-English language, the White kin were placed farthest away and the other minority kin were rated equally. Perhaps the negative attitude narrowed their attention to only one cue, that of minority ethnicity or "different from me". Other studies (e.g. Easterbrook, 1959) have demonstrated this reduction in perceptual attention span as a result of stress. Thus, attitude may interfere with the congitive reciprocity needed for accurate role taking by preventing full utilization of an ethnic cue when it is negative. The more general category of "minority" or "different" may be used instead.

The second conclusion relates to the effect of language differences on role taking. Language differences influenced role taking of a Liked ethnic group least, of a Disliked ethnic group only slightly, and of the child's Own group most of all. When taking a Disliked role, the children placed White kinship farther away from the other kinship when the role person spoke a non-English language. In other words, their preference ratings were somewhat more differentiated, than was the case when taking the role of an English-speaking person from that ethnic group. The children probably associated White ethnicity with English and minority ethnicity with non-English languages. This association may also explain

the sharp difference in ratings for a White role person who spoke English as opposed to one who spoke a non-English language. The French-speaking White person was thought to have less preference for a White kin and stronger affiliations with a Liked ethnic group kin than he did when speaking English. The children had likely built up a strong association between White and English, and this was called into question by the presentation of a White non-English person. This conflict affected most the preference for White kin as might be expected, and of the minority groups, selectively enhanced only the Liked ethnic group kin. Both Own and Liked ethnic group kin were equally desirable. Thus language differences created the most problem for own group role taking.

The third conclusion is that the children applied the same role-taking inferences (whether accurate or inaccurate) to adults choosing a nephew as they did to peers choosing an uncle. They therefore understood that different age groups use the same principles for kinship preference.

The fourth conclusion is that both age groups of children were at the same level as far as their role taking accuracy. The grade factor did not interact with any of the role by kin interactions. There was, however, some suggestion from another interaction that across all roles the younger children rated White kin most desirable in contrast to the older children who rated the Liked ethnicity kin most desirable. This suggests a slightly greater degree of egocentrism in the six-year-olds; the eight-year-olds may have been using a complex strategy which incorporated both their own positive attitude to the Liked ethnic group as

well as the feeling that such a minority group would have common affiliations with another minority even though the other is disliked. Both attitude and perceptions of similarity could have influenced these ratings.

The major issue in the present research was the extent to which children were able to abandon their own egocentric preferences and adopt the preferences of another person. So far, our conclusions have been that the children were accurate in taking the role of most of the ethnic-language representatives, except perhaps for the non-English speaking White role and for the Disliked roles. (See added Table) This lack of accuracy may not entirely be attributable to an egocentric tendency to assign disliked role preferences in line with one's own preferences. One striking piece of evidence is the lack of preference for the child's own ethnic group when taking the role of either a liked or disliked ethnic group member. To pursue the question further we compared the rank orderings on the attitude measure with the rank orderings on the similarity measure to see which most closely resembled the role taking ranks. This analysis was performed on the placement of nephews for the adult Liked and Disliked roles speaking English and non-English. The peer attitude ranking for each child was obviously Own, Liked, Middle, Disliked. The similarity ranks were based on each child's similarity ratings and determined according to a one-dimensional transitivity model. For example, to assess similarity to the liked representative, the second rank was filled by the ethnic group who had a similarity score closest to the liked group, and so on. For each child, we determined

the sum of the number of step changes required for the attitude ranks to match the nephew placement ranks for the four roles. A sum was also calculated to determine the match between similarity ranks and the nephew ranks.[2] On the basis of these attitude and similarity step changes, the children fell into one of three groups: those who had fewer similarity rank changes than attitude rank changes, those who had an equal number of similarity and attitude rank changes, and those who had fewer attitude rank changes than similarity rank changes. For both Liked roles, English and non-English speaking, a significantly greater number of children had fewer simlarity rank changes than attitude rank changes, $\underline{X}^2$ (2) = 19.12, $p<.001$ for English speaking, $\underline{X}^2$ (2) = 6.52, $p<.05$ for non-English speaking. This demonstrates that more children were basing a liked role person's preferences on the degree of similarity of that role person to the ethnic kin. Fewer children used predominantly their own preferences when taking the role of a liked person. For the Disliked English speaking role, this same pattern appeared, $\underline{X}^2$ (2) = 27.16, $p<.001$. However, for the Disliked non-English speaking role, there was a significant difference between first and third graders, $\underline{X}^2$ (2) = 7.22, $p<.05$. Over 80% of the third graders used similarity rankings more than their own attitude rankings; whereas an equal number of first graders used predominantly attitude rankings as did those who used similarity rankings. Egocentrism may therefore have contributed to the poor role taking of first graders in the Disliked non-English speaking role. Poor role taking in the Disliked English speaking role may have resulted from other factors such as lack of perceptual differentiation.

In summary, the results of this study support the predictions that ethnic and language differences make role taking more difficult than do age differences for white children. Attitudinal factors can also strongly influence role-taking accuracy by making a child revert to his former state of egocentrism or by impeding full cue utilization. Overall, there were very few differences between six- and eight-year-olds except for a slightly greater tendency toward egocentrism in the younger children.

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Footnotes

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1. Different languages were used for the adult and peer Oriental roles because we could not find two bilinguals with the same Oriental language. It was assumed that the subjects would not be able to differentiate between the two anyway.
2. The sum of the number of step changes was determined in the following manner. For example, in the Liked English speaking role, one particular subject placed the nephews in this order: Liked, Middle, Disliked, and Own. This order was compared with the rank orders made by this subject in the attitude measure (Own, Liked, Middle and Disliked) and in similarity to the Liked role (Liked, Middle, Disliked and Own). To match the order of the role preferences to the attitude would require 3 steps for the Own kin, 1 step for Liked, 1 step for Middle, and 1 step for Disliked, for a total of 6 steps. The role and similarity orders were identical, and thus would require zero step changes.

TABLE 1

Analysis of Variance for significant effects

Source	df	MS	F
Likability of the Role Ethnicity	2,96	775.23	8.80***
Language of the Role	1,48	1172.16	14.10***
Likability of the Kinship Ethnicity	3,144	3274.09	5.51**
Grade X Likability of the Role Ethnicity	2,96	365.09	4.15*
Grade X Likability of the Kinship Ethnicity	3,144	1918.91	3.23*
Likability of the Role Ethnicity X Likability of the Kinship Ethnicity	6,288	12345.08	24.91***
Language of the Role X Likability of the Kinship Ethnicity	3,144	2352.95	6.47***
Age of Role X Likability of the Kinship Ethnicity X Representative	8,384	535.25	2.55*
Likability of the Role Ethnicity X Language of the Role X Likability of the Kinship Ethnicity	6,288	623.64	2.16*
Grade X Age of Role X Likability of the Role Ethnicity X Language of the Role	2,96	245.46	3.79*

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

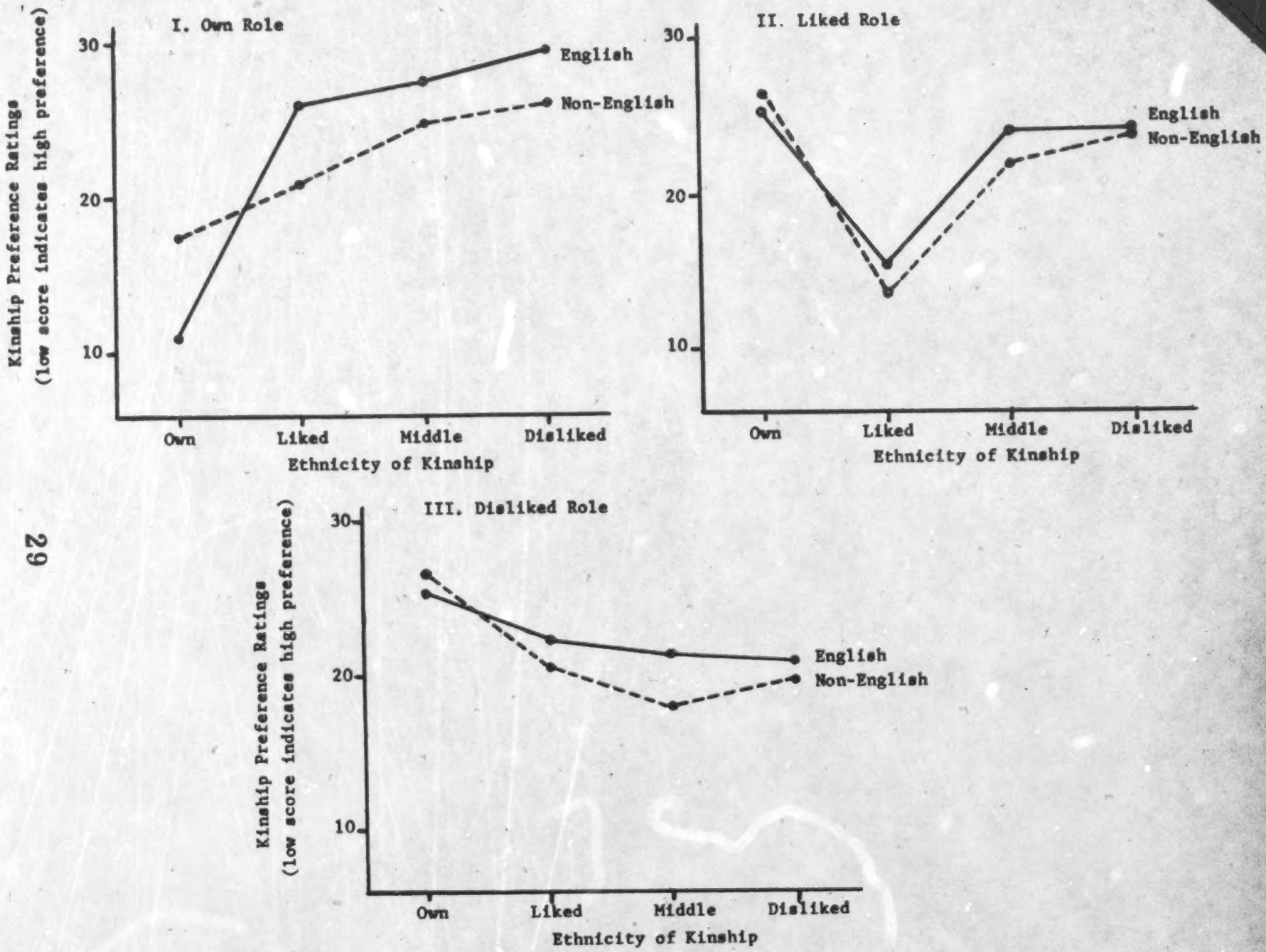
I. Own Role
II. Liked Role
III. Disliked Role
Kinship Preference Ratings
(low score indicates high preference)
30
20
10
English
Non-English
Own
Liked
Middle
Disliked
Ethnicity of Kinship

Figure Caption

1. Preference for four ethnic group kin when taking the role of three ethnic members speaking English or non-English.

TABLE 1

Attitude and Similarity Ratings
to Peers and Adults

	Ethnicity of Stimulus Person			
	Own	Liked	Middle	Disliked
Attitude				
Grade 1	10.45	20.81	28.28	38.45
Grade 3	15.57	17.69	23.08	29.27
Similarity				
Grade 1	10.06	31.66	34.68	40.60
Grade 3	6.36	27.86	31.22	32.48

Table 2

"Most Preferred" Ethnic Kin
(White American children)

	Frequency of Kin Categorization		
	Correct	Egocentric	Incorrect
Liked English Role			
Grade 1	21	13	16
Grade 3	32	9	9
Liked non-English Role			
Grade 1	22	12	16
Grade 3	27	4	19
Disliked English Role			
Grade 1	17	12	21
Grade 3	14	11	25
Disliked non-English Role			
Grade 1	14	8	28
Grade 3	20	1	29
Totals			
Grade 1	74	45	81
Grade 3	93	25	82

The errors that children made when taking the Disliked roles could have been of two sorts: an egocentric tendency to assign disliked role preferences in line with one's own preferences, or an inability to make the necessary differentiations between the various ethnic groups. In order to determine the nature of errors made by the children, we recorded for each subject the ethnic group considered to be most preferable as kin (i.e, the ethnic group with the lowest scale value). This "most preferred" group was then categorized as etiher Correct, Egocentric, or Incorrect (but not egocentric). As can be seen in Table 2, egocentric errors comprised less than a third of the total number of errors, were made more often by first graders than by third graders and more often when taking an English role than a non-English role. However, most of the errors made were not egocentric, for example choosing a Chinese uncle for a Chicano child.